

Random Encounters

Mind War - Bluer Than Blue

By Ramon Arjona



Goblins are generally not impressive creatures. They are short, weak, foul-tempered, and cowardly. If not for their great numbers and incredible fecundity, the other humanoid races would have wiped them out long ago.

But some goblins are born different than their brethren -- with blue-tinged skin, smooth foreheads, and a strange gleam of intelligence in their eyes. These goblins are known simply as "blues." Many are destroyed at birth, since goblins fear and loathe that which they do not understand. (Goblins fear and loathe a *lot* of things.) But some survive to adulthood, becoming paragons of their race and an unanticipated threat to other humanoid and goblinoid races.

Few have studied the blues in depth, and a lot of disagreement exists about their origins and means of creation. Some say they are the chosen sons of Magubliyet, who have been set by the goblin deity to ensure that his followers hold dominion over the world. Others say these goblins are throwbacks to a long forgotten time when psionic goblins were the world's dominant race, before their strange and evil experiments sent their entire species spinning into the forms they exist in today. Still others say the blues represent the next step in the growth of goblin-kind.

Lolo Binqi is once such goblin. Born to the favored mate of the leader of his tribe, he found himself protected from the quick death that the tribe members intended for him because of his strange appearance. Thus shielded from infanticide, Lolo grew up on the fringes of goblin society. Weak and small, even by goblin standards, Lolo would have been the frequent target of abuse, were it not for the strange powers he began to manifest. One bully who thought Lolo would be an easy target found his hair set on fire. Others learned to give the blue goblin a wide berth.

Soon, Lolo took to amusing his peers by setting other goblins on fire. He quickly attracted a wide following among the tribe members, and, when his father died, Lolo immediately moved to seize power. Once his grip on leadership of the tribe was solid, Lolo first moved to collect all the blues born to those under his command. Though blue births are infrequent, the goblin species' high birth rate allowed Lolo to collect a considerable number of blue offspring from his tribe. Freed from the threat of infanticide, these children trained to become Lolo's personal guards.

Now, surrounded by a private force of psionic goblins, Lolo Binqi is turning his eye toward conquest. He believes that the blues are the key to his plans of world domination, and he intends to first unite all goblin tribes under his banner so he can protect their psionic offspring and bring them into his psionic army. Then he intends to conquer the other goblinoid races. Surely, he reasons, the orcs and hobgoblins must have others like him, who are used to being ostracized and bullied because of their special gifts. These psionic goblinoids, Lolo reasons, will flock to him because of the power and acceptance he offers, and the goblinoid tribes will collapse before the might of his psionic armies. Then, there will be only the small matter of the humanoids -- the hated elves, dwarves, humans, gnomes and halflings -- standing between him and total control of the known world.

Lolo Binqi: Male blue (goblinoid) Psion 12 (Shaper); CR 12; Small humanoid; HD 12d4+24; hp 54; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 17; Atk +7/+2 melee (1d4, +1 Medium-size mind feeder quarterstaff); SA psionic combat modes (*ego whip, id insinuation, mind blast, mind thrust, psychic crush; empty mind, intellect fortress, mental barrier, thought shield, tower of iron will*); SQ darkvision 60 ft., psionics, psionic power points 72/day; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +10; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 8. Height 2 ft. 5 in.

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +11, Concentration +17, Craft (gemcutting) +16, Hide +6, Knowledge (psionics) +16, Knowledge (tactics) +4, Move Silently +6, Psicraft +16, Remote View +16, Spot +5; Combat Manifestation, Craft Crystal Capacitor, Craft Dorje, Craft Universal Item, Inertial Armor.

Psionic Powers (8/4/4/3/2/1; save DC 1d20 + power level + ability score modifier for key ability; 15 free 0-level manifestations): 0 -- bolt, detect psionics, far hand, finger of fire, inkling, know direction, lesser natural armor, trinket; 1st -- astral construct I, firefall, grease, minor creation; 2nd -- astral construct II, burning ray, ectoplasmic cocoon, ecto puppet; 3rd -- astral construct III, create food and water, greater concussion; 4th -- dismiss ectoplasm, fabricate, wall of ectoplasm; 5th -- ectoplasmic armor, ectoplasmic shambler; 6th -- astral construct VI.

Possessions: +1 Medium-size mind feeder quarterstaff, ring of protection +1, amulet of natural armor +1, headband of intellect +2, potion of cure moderate wounds, potion of cure light wounds (2).

Lolo Binqi is short by goblin standards, and he does not like to be reminded of this. Those

who call attention to his diminutive stature frequently find that they've been set afire by Lolo's psionic power. Lolo has not been content to simply focus on psionic study, but he has also delved into strategy and military history in preparation for his world conquest. He is self-confident to the point of arrogance, and he has begun to believe that it is his destiny to unite the world under his rule. Unfortunately for the world, the might of his psions and the brutality of his numerous goblin legions might give him the power he needs to make this "destiny" come true. As a psion Lolo may activate psionic combat modes and manifest powers that he knows as usual. In addition he retains his spell-like abilities for being a blue. These abilities are kept track of separately. Lolo may not use power points to activate these psionic combat modes or to manifest these powers unless he also knows them through his experience as a psion.

Psionics (Sp): At will-*charm person, far hand, and finger of fire.* These abilities are as the powers manifested by an 8th-level psion.

Attack/Defense Modes (Sp): At will-*ego whip, mind thrust/empty mind, mental barrier.*

Introducing Lolo Binqi to Your Campaign

- A squad of goblins, led by a strange creature with blue skin that looks vaguely goblinoid, ambushes the characters. This creature is Cartak Narg, one of Lolo's lieutenants, who is stealing gemstones from travelers in the area. The goblins are using these gemstones to create psionic weapons that Lolo will use to arm his forces in his upcoming conflict. The PCs may discover this plan and probably want to stop it.
- Rumors of a terrible goblin wizard from the barren lands abound. This wizard, known only as Binqi the Blue, is raising an army of goblins to take over the known world. Many adventurers have gone in search of this wizard, hoping to learn more of his plans and how to defeat them. None have returned.
- The characters encounter a well-organized goblin army on the march that is led by strange goblinoid creatures wearing black robes. There are too many goblins for the characters to fight openly, but they may wish to warn nearby towns and villages that a goblinoid legion is marching against them. Lolo Binqi, who rides in a palanquin guarded by a squad of psionic goblins and four psionic bugbears, leads the army. He has succeeded in uniting the goblinoids under him in sufficient numbers to confidently move against the humans. The PCs will be hard-pressed to find a way to stop him.

Bringing the Parts Together

You have several options available to you regarding how to bring this part into the other two. As the PCs seek out the remnants of the mindknights with Arthes or join up with a remaining member of the mindknights, they may find themselves facing Binqi's troops. This could eventually lead to a greater confrontation.

Coming in Part 4 of Mind War... Not all artifacts are arcane or divine.

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About the Author

Ramon Arjona is originally from Hawaii. He now lives in Washington State with his wife and two cats. His work has appeared in the *Hawai'i Review*, the *Absinthe Literary Review*, and *Strange Horizons*. He plans to become an 18th-level software developer so that he can get the bonus feats.